

# Yarra City Council and Neighbourhood Houses Partnerships Strategy & Action Plan 2018 - 2021

## Introduction

This partnership strategy was formulated by Yarra Neighbourhood Houses and representatives of Yarra City Council. It provides a partnership approach to addressing identified needs in the community. By working collaboratively, all parties can draw on each other's strengths and leverage resources.

Yarra is home to 89 710 people. About 19% of Yarra residents were born in non-English speaking countries and 23% speak a language other than English at home. The municipality is undergoing rapid change with many new housing developments and the population is expected to grow by 30% over the next 20 years.

The Yarra Neighbourhood Houses and Yarra City Council have a mutual goal to engage with the Yarra community in determining the provision of equitable recreational, social, vocational training environmental and other health and well-being opportunities. In order to work in a truly collaborative manner Yarra City Council and Yarra Neighbourhood Houses signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A key element of the MOU is the Annual Action Plan. Yarra City Council and Yarra Neighbourhood Houses have developed this Action Plan based on the objectives in the Council Plan 2017 – 2021. Priorities for collaborative work were identified together and actions were developed.

Annual action plan follows this will be reviewed annually to maintain flexibility.

## Vision

Council and Neighbourhood Houses collaborating with trust and respect to foster a cohesive, resilient, empowered and engaged community.

## Partnership Structure

The following mechanisms are in place to support the partnership to achieve its vision.

- Memorandum of Understanding
- Neighbourhood House Funding
- Annual Planning day with Yarra City Council and Neighbourhood Houses
- Monthly meetings of the Yarra Neighbourhood House Network

Four of the objectives of the Council Plan 2017 – 2021 were chosen as a focus for the Council and Neighbourhood House Strategy. These objectives are:

- *Community Health, Safety and well-being are a focus in everything we do*
- *Inclusion Diversity and Uniqueness are welcomed respected and celebrated*
- *Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment*

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## Year 2 Actions – 2019

- *Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive*

### 1. Community Health, Safety and Well-being

*Community well-being is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural and political conditions that enable people to flourish and fulfil their potential.*

Neighbourhood Houses provide opportunities to connect people across cultural and socio-economic divides thus building bridges between diverse groups. However, there is scope to expand the reach of neighbourhood houses. This can be achieved by reviewing activities and events that neighbourhood houses already run and plan ways to increase participation from diverse groups.

### 2. Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated

*Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council.*

Neighbourhood houses already make a significant contribution to this objective of the Council Plan through:

- Gathering spaces
- Cultural groups
- Food sharing
- Social enterprise development
- Mentoring
- Accessible education programs
- Family violence/ elder abuse awareness campaigns
- Celebrations and events that foster cultural exchange
- Provision of safe spaces

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Areas for Action – 2019

1. A healthy Yarra: Community Health, Safety and Well-being

*Community well-being is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural and political conditions that enable people to flourish and fulfil their potential.*

Area		Action	Who	Budget	Outcomes/ Outputs	Time Frame
<i>NH Programs</i>	1.1	Neighbourhood houses to learn about Results Based Accountability (RBA) and Collective Impact Framework(CIF)	Cheryle Grey (Services & Planning Unit)  Sue Kent (Belgium Ave)  North East Neigh'hood House Network (NENHN)	existing	Training on Collective Impact to be organised for all Houses and Management Committees.  Belgium Ave to develop a case study of how RBA is applied to programs and to share with the Network.  Houses to participate in the NENHN Evaluation Community of Practice to develop skills in applying RBA to programs.	March 2019  August 2019  May 2019
<i>Partnerships</i>	1.2	Neighbourhood Houses and Yarra Libraries to work together to build and strengthen relationships and increase collaborative activities.	All Houses Yarra Libraries	existing	Share calendar of House events for the year to promote on Council and Yarra Libraries social media.  Library staff to meet with Individual Houses to support and promote House program/events.	2019
<i>Consultations</i>	1.3	Neighbourhood Houses to participate in the consultation process for the development of Council's key strategies eg Volunteering, open spaces, urban agriculture	Council All Houses	existing	Council to explore running face to face consultation at Houses to reach particular cohorts that may be under- represented in	2019

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					consultations.  Houses to continue to make strategies available to community members in hard copy and through on line communication.	2019
<i>Open spaces</i>	1.4	Council to work with Houses to activate small scale, under-utilised open spaces to foster opportunities for local connection.	All Houses Council Open Space Unit	existing	“Greening streets”- Investigate community growing spaces near Houses.  Council sustainability Unit to support Houses in navigating the requirements to set up raised beds on nature strips, at the end of Courts and No-Through roads as gathering spaces.  Explore how to further develop housing estate open spaces in collaboration with Office of Housing.	2019

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2. An inclusive Yarra: Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated

*Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council.*

Area		Action	Who	Budget	Outcome/ Outputs	Time Frame
<i>Gathering spaces/celebration</i>	2.1	Houses and Council to actively collaborate in support, promotion and delivery of on-going celebrations and festivals eg Harvest Festival, Harmony Day, Sustainability Week, fetes.	All Houses Council Communication s Unit Yarra Libraries	existing	Develop a calendar of House events to include on Council website and shared with Yarra Libraries.  Council to promote Carlton Harmony Day activities  Yarra Libraries contribute to Link newsletter for housing estates.	2019
	2.2	NHs and council to partner in an annual NH Network event eg Music from the Heart and identify opportunities to build on the success of past events	All Houses Yarra Libraries	existing	Partner with Libraries to develop written / digital Stories “From the Heart” leading up to From the Heart Event.  Review the evaluation of “From the Heart” event and determine plan for 2019 event.	2019
<i>Skills Developing/Skills Harnessing</i>	2.3	Neighbourhood Houses to learn about Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)	Cheryle Grey (Services & Planning Unit)  Neighbourhood Houses Victoria (NHVic)	existing	Training on ABCD to be organised for all Houses.  Houses complete online NHVic Micro-credential training program in Community Development Principles.	2019
<i>Safe Spaces</i>	2.4	Identify professional development for House staff and volunteers on how to listen, refer and provide information about what is available in the community.	All Houses Women’s Health in the North (WHIN)	existing	Houses attend & promote “Identifying Family Violence” Training available through WHIN and other relevant agencies.	2019

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		<p>Explore options for council to support professional development for example: Mental Health First Aid training, Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF). Eg.Link in with Council's Skills Training, Women's Health in the North or other networks</p>	<p>Community Partnerships Yarra Libraries</p> <p>Sue Kent (Belgium Ave)</p> <p>Elly Murrell (Community Partnerships)</p> <p>Michele Watson (Services and Planning Unit)</p> <p>Laurice Young (Services and Planning Unit)</p> <p>Community Partnerships/ Yarra Settlement Forum(YSF)</p> <p>NENHN</p>		<p>Council to explore opening up training to Houses on relevant topics; eg Mental Health First Aid, Identifying Children at Risk, Dealing with Challenging Behaviours.</p> <p>Belgium Ave to engage with Melbourne University students to develop a presentation on presentation on place making.</p> <p>Grants newsletter to be distributed to all Houses.</p> <p>Houses to offer community training sessions on navigating My AgedCare.</p> <p>Houses to offer Advocacy sessions on National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).</p> <p>Houses to access YSF training eg, Human Rights &amp; Racism, Unconscious Bias, Cultural Competence.</p> <p>Develop list for support services for House Staff eg. professional debriefing, external supervision/mentoring.</p>	<p>2019</p>
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3. A sustainable Yarra: Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment

*Protecting our natural environment and supporting our community to reduce its environmental footprint will continue to be a priority for Council.*

Area		Action	Who	Budget	Outcome/ Outputs	Time Frame
<i>Information and education</i>	3.1	Neighbourhood houses to generate list and description of all sustainability activities and share with Sustainability Officers at Council – include information about demonstration sites eg low water use gardens and learning clubs. Best practice compost.	All Houses Council Sustainability Unit	existing	Raise the profile of Houses as Sustainability Hubs via Council social media, signage, branding etc. eg. Composting demonstrations at Finbar  Sustainability Engagement Officer to visit Houses and attend monthly Network meetings.  Explore running a Sustainable tour of Houses as part of Sustainable Living Festival.  Houses contribute to monthly sustainability eNews (info@Yarra Life).	2019
	3.2	Council's Living Sustainably pages to link to neighbourhood house sustainability initiatives and programs	Sustainability Unit Communication Unit	existing	Council to include ALL Sustainability programs/activities/workshops/ recycling etc provided by Houses on Council website.  Council to promote House sustainability activities via networks and eNews.	2019

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<i>Reduce waste to landfill</i>	3.3	Council to support neighbourhood houses to be recycling drop-off points (for nonorganic and no hard waste items eg mobile phones and batteries)	All Houses Council Sustainability Unit / Recycling Unit  NENHN  Yarra Libraries	existing	Houses to access Council's recycled materials for recycled art activities.  Council to support Houses to install a recycle station. Council to collect recycling materials from Houses.  Houses to explore Repair workshops eg; Develop a bank of repairers and share with all Houses.  Yarra Libraries 'weeded collection" to be donated to Houses "Little libraries".	2019
	3.4	Develop Neighbourhood Composting Education and engagement	Sustainability Unit Finbar	existing	Expand Composting education and engagement eg, Support apartment dwellers set up worm farms.  Council to document case study with Finbar on apartment worm farming and share with other Houses.	2019
<i>Facilitate Urban Agriculture</i>	3.5	Continue to strengthen the relationship between neighbourhood houses and Urban Agriculture at Council and explore urban agriculture initiatives eg community orchard, fruit squad, food swap, seed swap	All Houses  Sue Kent (Collingwood)  Michele Watson	existing	Houses identify opportunities for more community gardens.  Explore role of Houses in Food rescue. Explore Food distribution location for Second Bite in Collingwood.	2019



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4. Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive

*Supporting local businesses and creative industries not only contributes to Yarra’s economy, but also increases employment opportunities, enhances street life and fosters community connectedness.*

Area		Action	Who	Budget	Outcomes / Outputs	Time Frame
<i>Employment pathways and micro business and social enterprises for economically disadvantaged.</i>	4.1	<p>Meet with Economic Development Unit from council to understand what services they provide, and how neighbourhood house participants can access these resources and services.</p> <p>Explore the potential for partnership opportunities eg NHs to promote or host council’s Lunchbox Learning series of seminars.</p>	<p>Economic Development Unit (EDU) All Houses</p>	existing	<p>Houses to input into EDU Events Calendar for 2020.</p> <p>EDU to present at Yarra NH network.</p> <p>Cross promotion of Economic Development Unit Lunchbox Learning sessions.</p> <p>Houses to contribute to EDU eBulletin – (reach of 3000 people fortnightly).</p> <p>Promote access to Lynda.com for small business training modules available through library membership.</p> <p>Houses to promote Council’s young entrepreneur program.</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>2019</p>